
Appendix C

Structural Triage and Preparation

Size-up Considerations

- What is the current and expected weather?
- Are fuels heavy, moderate, or light? What is the arrangement and continuity of fuels?
- Note any hazardous topography.
- What have fires in this area done before?
- What is the fire's current and expected behavior?
 - ♦ What is the rate and direction of spread?
 - ♦ What is the potential for spotting and firebrands?
 - ♦ Will topographical features or expected weather changes affect the rate of spread?
- What are the number and density of structures threatened?
- What are the available resources?
- Will you have to evacuate people or animals?
 - ♦ Are there residents that will not evacuate?
- How hazardous is the structure?
 - ♦ What is the roofing material?
 - ♦ Are the gutters full of litter?
 - ♦ Are there open eaves and unscreened vents?
 - ♦ Does the structure have wooden decking?
 - ♦ Is there defensible space?
 - ♦ Are there large windows with flammable drapes or curtains?
 - ♦ What is the size and location of propane tanks and/or fuel storage tanks?

Fire Fighter Safety

- What are the routes of egress and ingress?
 - ♦ What is the largest engine that can access the structure safely?
 - ♦ Are the roads two way or one way?
 - ♦ Are there road grades steeper than 10%?
 - ♦ Are the road surfaces all weather?
 - ♦ Are there load-limited bridges?

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- Are there anchor points for line construction?
 - Are there adequate safety zones?
 - What are the escape routes?
 - Are there special hazards such as hazardous materials, explosives, high-voltage lines, or above ground fuel tanks?
 - Are communications adequate?

Structure Triage Categories

Sort structures into one of three categories:

1. Stand Alone or Not Threatened

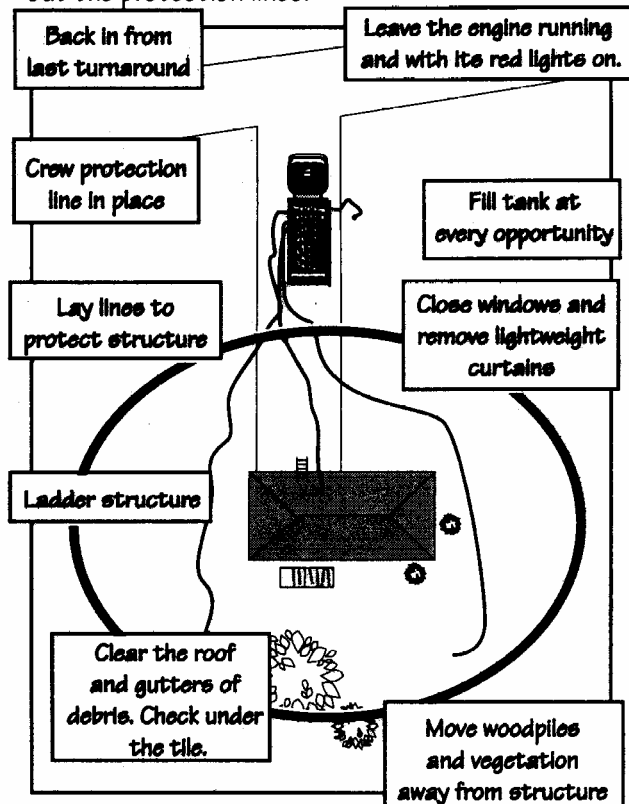
2. Defendable

3. Not Defendable

- Factors that may make an attempt to save a structure too dangerous or hopeless.
 - ♦ The fire is making sustained runs in live fuels and there is little or no defensible space.
 - ♦ Spot fires are too numerous to control with existing resources.
 - ♦ Water supply will be exhausted before the threat has passed.
 - ♦ The roof is more than 1/3 involved in flames.
 - ♦ There is fire inside the structure.
 - ♦ Rapid egress from the area is dangerous or may be delayed.

ENGINE POSITIONING AND SETUP

It is critical that you position you, your personnel and apparatus in positions to protect the structure, but also so that you can make a quick move, if necessary. Prepare the structure and lay out the protection lines.



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Common Ignition Points

- Flammable roof coverings and debris.
- Unscreened vents, windows or holes.
- Open doors, windows or crawl spaces.
- Wooden decks, lawn furniture, stacked wood and trash piles.
- Openings under porches or patio covers.

REMEMBER: In windy conditions, firebrands can enter almost any opening.

¹ William Teie, "Firefighter's Guide, Urban/Wildland Situations" (Deer Valley Press, 1995).